The two sides are discussing the boundary question in the framework of the Joint Working Group. India and China have reiterated the objective of seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question through dialogue. The Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas (1993) and the Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas (1996) provide an institutional framework for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the India-China border areas.

Government remain vigilant and take all necessary and appropriate measures to safeguard the sovereignty, territoral integrity and security of India.

Statement of Chief of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen

2344. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) wether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Pioneer of January 31, 2000, to the effect that Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Chief of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen had stated that his organisation considered India as enemy number one;

(b) whether it has also come to Government's notice that the US has called this militant outfit as a terrorist organisation and has been pressing Pakistan regime to shut it down; and

(c) if so, what was the Pak regime's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the news item published in the Pioneer on January 31, 2000. The United States of America has declared the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen as a terrorist organization. In a testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Chief Coordinator for counter terrorist in the US State Department informed the Senate Committee that Separatist groups involved in terrorism in Kashmir, such as the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, have been using Pakistan as their base and there have been reports that they have also been receiving material support from Pakistan. The United States has also been calling upon Pakistan to crackdown on such terrorist organizations operating within its territories.

Pakistan's state sponsorship of cross border terrorism in Jammu & kashmir and elsewhere in India continues unabated. This is now widely acknowledged

by the international community, which openly recognizes Pakistan's state sponsorship of terrorism and the impact this has on the security of India and the region.

Visit of Foreign Minister to Moscow

2345. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had recently paid a visit to Moscow for talks and longterm collaboration in defence, trade and economic affairs; and

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) The External Affairs Minister paid an official visit to the Russian Federation from May 23—25, 1999. During the visit, EAM had a telephonic conversation with then President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin. EAM also met Deputy Prime Minister Valentina Matvienko, then Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, then Special Envoy of the Russian President to the Balkans Viktor Chernomyrdin and the Mayor of the City of Moscow Yuri Luzhkov. EAM had a detailed exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues with his counterpart, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. During these discussions, both sides underlined that Indo- Russian relations were time-tested and based on continuity, trust and mutual understanding. Our interaction with the Russian Federation is comprehensive and multifaceted. Further measures to strengthen and develop our bilateral cooperation in all areas were touched upon. It was agreed that a Declaration on Strategic Partnership between India and the Russian Federation would be signed at the next Indo-Russian Summit.

Dues on United Nation

2346. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that United Nation owes India's about $50 million in peace keeping dues;

(b) if so, since when these arrears have been due;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with United Nations; and